



## **2008 Operating Plan**

### **Friends of Casco Bay**

**November 2007**

*for internal use only*

In addition to the programmatic and administrative activities outlined below, we will continue to be as responsive as possible to opportunities and emerging issues that may impact Casco Bay and Friends of Casco Bay.

#### **I. Program**

##### **a. Water Quality Monitoring**

- i. Continue Citizen Stewards Monitoring Program, roughly 10 sampling dates with 20 sampling events at 40 sites around Casco Bay. This will be the 4<sup>th</sup> summer of nitrogen sampling (dissolved inorganic nitrogen as DIN), and this will be the 16<sup>th</sup> year of sampling. Additional parameters to be measured, as usual, include: temperature, salinity, secchi, dissolved oxygen (DO), and pH.
- ii. Continue sampling at 10 profile stations around the Bay, staff using sonde via the big boat. During winter months, only 3 of the 10 sites may be sampled if weather so dictates. Number of sampling events is once per month, reduced in 2007 from 2 per month in warm weather months, in order to redeploy staff time and financial resources to nitrogen investigations. Additional parameters to be measured, include temperature, salinity, secchi, dissolved oxygen (DO), chlorophyll fluorescence, pH, and Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen (organic nitrogen).
- iii. Nitrogen sampling as a complete suite at 4 sites will continue. Sampling from the SMCC dock for DIN (since 2001) was expanded in 2007 to include sampling other dimensions of the nitrogen picture to attain measurement of Total Nitrogen (Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen (organic) as well as DIN (inorganic) and chlorophyll *a*. This sampling regime was expanded to include sampling at two more sites: Knightville Landing in South Portland, not far from South Portland Treatment Plant outfall, the mouth of the Presumpscot River where we have a sonde in the water from May to October, and the mouth of Anthoine Creek in Pleasantdale Cove in South Portland.
- iv. There is likely to be a small expansion in the Nitrogen sampling effort depending on what comes out of the Maine Dept. of Environmental Protection's response to the Nitrogen Resolve in 2007, requiring them to design a plan for measuring Nitrogen inputs and setting criteria and limits for Casco Bay.

- v. Presumpscot River Targeted Watershed Initiative with EPA has been stretched into 2008. For the third year, a sonde will be attached to the Falmouth float at Walton Park from May – October. It will record data every 15 minutes, checked weekly and swapped out every other week for downloading of data and recalibration.
  - vi. Friends of Casco Bay will continue to contribute to efforts to determine the viability of removing or modifying the causeway that impedes tidal flow between the New Meadows Lake and the upper New Meadows estuary. During 2008, FOCB will deploy temperature sensors at four sites to collect data to be submitted to a modeling effort. This will simply require deployment of the sensors from May to October with monthly site checks. For the 8<sup>th</sup> year, FOCB will deploy a sonde near the New Meadows Marina to collect the usual water quality parameters on an hourly basis for about a month, from late June into July. FOCB is one of the founding members of the New Meadows River Watershed Project, and staff serve on the data subcommittee.
- b. Stormwater sampling
- i. The Town of Cumberland has limited funds for the second year for a limited round of stormwater sampling. We will be working with the town again to identify an appropriate neighborhood for sampling. In 2007, Cumberland approached FOCB and sampling was conducted at the Wildwood neighborhood.
  - ii. Maine Board of Pesticides Control has limited funds for 2008 for pesticide sampling in stormwater. We will work with MBPC to identify an appropriate site for sampling in the spring of 2008. This work may be combined with the Cumberland effort to maximize use of their limited funding.
- c. Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- We will expand our use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for presenting our water quality data to make it as easy to understand as possible. Mike Doan will continue developing presentation materials through GIS using the Health Index and other parameters of water quality, with maps of regions of Casco Bay as the background.
- d. Murphy Water Quality Database
- We need a new platform for the water quality database known as Murphy. It was written in DOS in 1994, and needs to be upgraded and re-secured. In addition, modules need to be developed so that volunteers can submit their water quality data online, the data can be “quality assured” then made available on line, along with products that present the data in interesting visual GIS-based formats. Common Good Ventures is helping FOCB as a special Affiliated Partner to assist us with finding the expertise we need to engage an appropriate designer to move this forward, and to develop and articulate the plan for redevelopment to assist with the fundraising effort.
- e. Baykeeping
- Ongoing Baykeeping issues, which the Baykeeper and others must be engaged in and responsive to, continue to include:

1. Oil spill preparedness
2. Dredging
3. Combined sewer overflows, especially with the City of Portland. This issue may or may not require legal consultation(s).
4. Efforts with the State regarding Nitrogen inputs to Casco Bay, the establishment of Nitrogen criteria and limits, and work with the various stakeholders, e.g. treatment plant operators. This comes out of the Legislative Resolve passed in 2007.
5. Keeping an eye on such activities as the coal tar remediation effort in Portland, snow dumping proposals, and waterfront development projects.
6. Attendance at groups as diverse as the Waterfront Alliance (Portland) and the Waterkeeper Alliance.
7. Weigh, with board and staff leadership, the import and impact of other emerging issues, and craft our response.

f. BayScaping and Water Quality Program Presentations

One of the strengths here is making scientific data understandable as a motivator for people to change their habits in ways that will result in a more positive impact on the health of the Bay. As the visibility of FOCB has increased (an organizational goal in the 2005-2008 Strategic Plan), there is a greater call from the community for FOCB presentations. During 2008, we will continue to respond to the demand for BayScaping presentations in the community. In addition, we will offer presentations on the Water Quality Monitoring Program and the nitrogen issue, in particular. We will host a Health Index presentation as part of at least one presentation in the eastern reaches of Casco Bay; we have received restricted funding for that purpose.

g. Pumpout Program

- i. Given the No Discharge Area of Casco Bay and the slow attention given to pumpout compliance by the Maine Dept. of Environmental Protection, the Pumpout Program continues to play an essential role in Casco Bay, in terms of direct reduction of sewage discharges into the Bay, the education of boaters through the program's ambassadorial function, and as a liaison between the DEP and those marinas in out-of-service mode.
- ii. We will continue to maintain excellent relations with Maine Yacht Center where we have been allowed to discharge our pumpout holding tank at no cost. In addition, we will continue to encourage the DEP to launch a pump service program to help get pumps back up and running in a more timely way.
- iii. The Pumpout Program breaks even because of reimbursements and dedicated funding. The DEP reimburses FOCB for 75% of the costs of running the program, and the City of South Portland (Water Resources Division) and Portland Water District both make contributions to support this program (\$5,000 out of a \$9,000 gift, and \$2,500, respectively).

h. Casco Bay Curriculum

We will continue to work with teachers and educational administrators to disseminate the Casco Bay Curriculum in the community and continue to refine and update the working modules.

i. Media and Public Relations

- i. We will continue to build on the already excellent record we have with getting our message out to various media connections. We will continue to find opportunities for print and television media to run feature stories on aspects of our work, staff, board and volunteers, and we will continue issuing press releases on everything newsworthy, from the appointment of new board and staff members, to program initiatives, funding successes, crucial partnerships, and volunteer accomplishments.
- ii. We will continue exploring ways to keep our website dynamic and loaded with substantive and easily accessible information about our work and Casco Bay.
- iii. Print media: we will generate 3 four-page full color newsletters or 2 newsletters and one position paper mailing, the Annual Report, a sponsorship booklet to commemorate the next special event, and other program-related information based materials.

j. New Initiatives in Community Engagement and our work

The staff explored a number of ideas about ways to bring our data and science deeper into our community, on more of a neighborhood by neighborhood basis. During 2008, we will have a more active Speaking Program, accepting engagement requests that we feel are strategic, where we can talk about specific initiatives, invite the public to attend, solicit for volunteers as well as financial support, and do follow up mailings.

We will continue to discuss other avenues and mechanisms for talking directly with people about issues that concern the Bay. If a potential and viable idea(s) emerges that would require significant resources (time and or money), we will formulate a rough plan to bring to the Board for review, input, refinement, re-drafting and a decision about moving forward. We would identify costs associated and put together a fund raising plan accordingly and only after a formal decision.

## **II. Development**

- a. 2008 will mark the first year of full capacity in the Development office, with both a Development Director and a full time Assistant on board. A more robust development plan will be developed and followed that should result in continued increases in contributions from individuals and corporations, and a significant increase in foundation revenue.
- b. Over the past four years, we have learned how to use our development software more effectively. During 2008, we will continue to increase our knowledge level using some pro

bono expertise that is available to us. We will also embark on a process of reviewing and cleaning up old data in the system.

- c. The Development office will continue to set up donor visits, involving key staff and board members.
- d. We will continue working with individual board members to find the best ways to engage them in resource building with us.
- e. We will continue to enlist board members to write notes on fund raising letters. During 2008, we will engage the board in reviewing the member list to identify members who may have a greater donor capacity to support FOCB; we'll develop strategies accordingly.

### **III. Events**

- a. At a meeting of the PR/Development Committee on November 9, 2007, it was agreed that sponsored events have brought a tremendous return, from leveraging board relationships with the corporate sponsors, to raising much needed revenue, to promoting aspects of our core message and mission more effectively with the public, providing visibility and networking opportunities and a focus for media relations. The design of a sponsorship event for 2008 is already underway, and we should plan the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event for 2009 as soon as is feasible.
- b. We will host at least two friend-raising events, in the form of house parties or similarly intimate engagements/presentations. We have held one such event each of the past 3 years (Peaks Island, Little Diamond Island, and Cushing Island). The eastern part of Casco Bay will be the focus for at least one of the 2008 events.
- c. Combining the Annual Meeting with the Volunteer Recognition Event around the end of the sampling season, mid October to mid November, has worked well. During 2007, we combined these with the sponsored Special Event. We will explore whether for 2008 we will again combine all 3, or host two separate events. If separate, we will explore opportunities to raise sponsors for the Annual Meeting/Volunteer Recognition, in addition to the Special Event.
- d. We will work with Adam Taylor to provide support to the Hook and Slice tournament in late August of 2008.
- e. Other opportunities will arise that will lend themselves as tours, board/staff socials, press conferences, fund raisers, and presence at the events of others throughout the year. Before committing to such opportunities, we will, as we have, try to assess in advance what return the event will bring us, considering cost, time, visibility, relationship building opportunity, and other factors. Also, see item I(f) above, referencing presentations about BayScaping and the Water Quality Monitoring Program.

#### **IV. Administration**

- a. The staff now consists of 8 full time people, and a seasonal pumpout ambassador, and an SMCC intern with us for one semester each year. Cost of living increases have been budgeted effective the first of July, based on Oct 2007 Social Security Administration rates.
- b. The Staff Handbook is in need of review and revision. We will put together a board/staff work group to tackle this.
- c. The Strategic Plan will be renewed this year.
- d. Changing our fiscal year end should be explored and planned during 2008 for enactment during 2009. This will entail: choosing the most appropriate year end date (March 31 may be the most appropriate, given the field work seasons), having a short year with the closing of the books short year tax return filing, and commensurate re-issuing of financial statements and restatements in subsequent years. We also need to explore the best timing for upgrading our accounting software, which might best be done prior to the fiscal year end change.
- e. Operating policies and procedures will be gathered and put into a more organized format.

#### **V. Board**

We continue to engage Board members, individually and collectively, in understanding our mission and programs as thoroughly as possible, to identify opportunities to strengthen the organization through deeper engagement around policy issues, program focus, board development, and connection to resources (financial and otherwise).